

separating the resulting solution from the remaining solids.

14. (once amended) A process for recovering metal values including tantalum metal values and niobium metal values from a source material comprising tantalum, niobium and uranium metal values, the process comprising:

digesting the source material in a sulfuric acid solution comprising:

sulfuric acid;

a reducing agent; and

an additive comprising carbon;

for a period of time sufficient to solubilize tantalum metal values and niobium metal values and form a digestion mixture comprising an aqueous phase comprising solubilized tantalum metal values and niobium metal values, and a solid phase comprising uranium metal values ;

heating the digestion mixture for a period of time sufficient to attain a temperature of 75-95 °C; and

separating the resulting solution comprising tantalum metal values and niobium metal values from the remaining solids comprising uranium metal values.

The following Remarks are submitted in response to the Office Action mailed May 6, 1998.

Remarks

Applicant respectfully requests an extension of time to respond to the Office Action. Filed herewith is a Request for Extension of Time Pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136a.

Claims 1-17 are pending in the application. Claims 1-13 stand rejected under 35 USC 103(a) and 112, first paragraph. Claims 1-17 stand rejected under 35 USC 112, second paragraph. In addition, the Title stands objected to.

This Response addresses the issues pointed out by the Examiner in the Office Action and it is believed, places the Application in condition for allowance, wherefore such action is respectfully solicited.